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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KINSHASA 001010

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KPKO](#) [CG](#) [UN](#)

SUBJECT: DPKO AFRICA CHIEF TITOV VISIT TO THE DRC

Classified By: Ambassador Roger Meece. Reason 1.4 (b/d).

1. (C) Summary: UN DPKO Africa Division Chief Dmitry Titov briefed several diplomats June 11 on his visit to the DRC, the first in two years. Titov spoke of particular concerns regarding Ituri District, and negative influence from neighboring states. In addition, Titov reported palpable tension in the Kasai and Katanga provinces in the lead-up to June 30, lack of progress to-date securing FDLR returns to Rwanda, and continuing weaknesses in Independent Electoral Commission operations around the country. Concerns notwithstanding, Titov sounded a relatively hopeful note on the situation in the Kivus, in fact we think a bit too hopeful. The Ambassador and others encouraged DPKO to submit MONUC elections support financial requirements to the UNSC as soon as possible. Titov's visit was useful, although it is discouraging that the DPKO African section chief has not paid a field visit in two years to DPKO's biggest operation. End summary.

2. (SBU) Several diplomatic missions were invited to a briefing session June 11 by UN DPKO Africa Division Chief Dmitry Titov at MONUC headquarters in Kinshasa. The South African, French, and American ambassadors, along with the Belgian and British Charges attended. Titov had just completed roughly a week of travel in the DRC's interior as part of his first visit to the DRC in roughly two years. Titov noted that he had not yet had time to review his observations with SRSB Bill Swing, out of the country on official travel, and therefore qualified his comments as preliminary personal thoughts.

3. (C) Titov provided an extensive tour d'horizon, touching on most of the subjects familiar to those following the DRC transition process, including military integration and security sector reform programs, elections planning, arms trafficking, security concerns in various regions, especially in eastern DRC, and continuing ill effects of ongoing illegal resource exploitation by foreign and Congolese operators. Titov expressed particular concern about the situation in Ituri District despite progress in recent months to disarm large numbers of militia combatants (further details septel). Titov particularly singled out Ugandan Ituri-related activities contributing to renewed security threats. Titov's comments implied doubt as to MONUC's capacity to undertake major new military operations in the Kivu provinces while maintaining a high tempo of ongoing operations in Ituri.

4. (C) Titov also reported what he said was palpable tension in Lubumbashi (Katanga) and Mbuji-Mayi (Eastern Kasai), as well as Kinshasa in the run-up to the June 30 two-year DRC Transition anniversary date. (Note: Tensions being fed by opposition UDPS call for the transition to end June 30, with street demonstrations intended to result in UDPS leader Tshisekedi's installation in a newly-established Prime

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Minister position. End note.) He expressed hope that efforts at dialogue could bring Tshisekedi around to some kind of political compromise. Ideally, UDPS support for election preparations could be secured.

5. (C) Titov also noted that the San Egidio-brokered Rome declaration of FDLR readiness to return to Rwanda has thus far not produced any significant movement. He observed that the FDLR president would soon be completing his travel to the field and held out hope that efforts could still produce significant FDLR returns. Speaking of North and South Kivu provinces more generally, Titov took a somewhat more optimistic tone. He praised the performance of current MONUC units in North and South Kivu, and suggested that concerns over tensions focused on the Banyamulenge community in South Kivu may be exaggerated. Noting that there have been recent significant Banyamulenge returns to the province, he said he believed there is decreasing hostility in the province, with concern more centered on the lack of economic opportunity for the provincial population in general. Titov spoke of the possibility of generating renewed donor programs to create islands of hope in the Kivus.

6. (C) Titov also noted that the visible presence of the Independent Electoral Commission (CEI) in much of the country is very weak. More needs to be done to increase its presence, as well as to reinforce its communications program. Related, Titov described plans to extend further MONUC-run Radio Okapi operations, included in the Kasai provinces.

Titov also pushed for early adoption of an electoral code of conduct<sup>8</sup> to establish ground rules for parties and candidates leading to general elections.

17. (C) During subsequent discussion, the Ambassador and others strongly encouraged DPKO to put on the table as soon as possible financial requirements for needed MONUC logistics support to the election process to permit planning to move forward. Regarding continuing serious concerns about needed DRC election money, the French Ambassador speculated about getting the issue on the G8 Summit agenda. The Ambassador and others cautioned that, while Ituri's security situation may indeed take some extended time to be normalized, the Kivus cannot simply be put on a back-burner awaiting Ituri stability. Progress is needed in both regions. With others concurring, the Ambassador expressed some skepticism that the UDPS could be brought around to a compromise regarding June 30 and the transition, given Tshisekedi's past record and general unwillingness to engage in political negotiation. Efforts, however, are worth pursuing. The South African Ambassador spoke of the need to begin thinking about a post-election role for the international community. Several of the diplomats also praised MONUC's reorganization, more aggressive military posture, the performance of Eastern Division Commander Major-General Cammaert, and SRSB Swing.

18. (C) Comment: The visit appeared to be useful in giving Titov an exposure to MONUC current operations and the situation on the ground in the DRC. It is disappointing, however, that this is the first visit in two years of the DPKO Africa Chief to the site of the UN's largest peacekeeping operation. We think Titov may be a bit too optimistic regarding tension levels focused on South Kivu's Banyamulenge community, and believe that this will continue to be an area needing continuing attention and active international community engagement for some time to come. Nonetheless, Titov is on target regarding the need for stepped-up development efforts in the east. Finding productive activities for the very large numbers of current or former combatants will be a key to durable stability in the region. Titov's comments about MONUC capacity in Ituri and the Kivus appears to reflect concerns in MONUC about being stretched too tightly for too long a period of time in a high-tempo operational pace over very large areas with limited capacity. This is likely to be an ongoing discussion in the foreseeable future. While this involves many factors, including views of the troop-contributing countries and their units in-country, some UN actions could help as well. Notably, loosening DPKO's highly restrictive rules regarding night operations by the night-capable MONUC helicopter flights crews in eastern Congo could significantly extend MONUC's overall combat effectiveness. End comment.  
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